



Parade of Athletes celebrates the Games



The 31st National Veterans Golden Age Games is officially underway. More than 1,200 attendees, including Veterans, family members and caregivers filled the Magnolia Ballroom of the Beau Rivage, May 8, as the ceremonial torch was lit.

The annual Parade of Athletes is a tradition at the Games, and brings Veterans, from across the nation, together in teamwork and spirit. The room was filled with emotion as the Colors were posted, and the Veterans gathered joined together singing the National Anthem, while the 41st U.S. Army National Guard Ensemble played music in the background.

"It was such an honor to be around all of my fellow Veterans", commented Millie Orey, Army Veteran (1974-1976). The Grand Junction, Colorado native added, "Watching them carry the flags into the room and all of us singing the national anthem together brought tears to my eyes."

Athletes, representing 46 states, the District of Columbia,

and two territories proudly paraded into the room displaying the regions they represent. Seating was separated by state, as athletes wearing their team or state colors displayed electrifying energy, celebrating the 2017 Games.

Faye Jefferson, Navy Veteran (1970-1991) said, "I wish I had known about the Games years ago, this is such an amazing event and the way they honored Veterans last night during the awards ceremony made me proud," included the Gulfport, Mississippi resident.

"That was one of the most fantastic opening ceremonies, I have ever been to," said Nick Nichols, from Topeka, Kansas. The Air Force Veteran (1966-1970) added, "This had them all beat and it brought the house down. I turned around and from where I was sitting, listening to the crowd proved it was a fantastic show."

Photos by Wayne Alley/Gulf Coast VA Medical Center/Medical Media

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10		
8 – 11 a.m.		
AIR RIFLE Mississippi Coast Convention Center Hall C/D		
9 a.m. – Noon		
BADMINTON SINGLES Miss. Coast Convention Center E2 60-64		
BOCCIA SINGLES Mississippi Coast Convention Center E1 55-59		
HORSESHOES Mississippi Coast Convention Center E4 65-69		
NINEBALL Mississippi Coast Convention Center Hall D 70-74		
SHUFFLEBOARD Mississippi Coast Convention Center E4 75-79		
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.		
BOWLING Gaude Lanes Keesler AFB 80-84, 85-89, 90+		
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.		
TABLE TENNIS Miss. Coast Conv. Center E3 80-84, 85-89, 90+		
12:30 – 2:30 p.m.		
AIR RIFLE Mississippi Coast Convention Center Hall C/D		
1 – 4 p.m.		
BADMINTON SINGLES Convention Center E2 70-74, 65-69		
BOCCIA SINGLES Mississippi Coast Convention Center E1 80-84		
HORSESHOES Mississippi Coast Convention Center E4 75-79		
NINEBALL Mississippi Coast Convention Center E3 55-59		
SHUFFLEBOARD Mississippi Coast Convention Center E4 60-64		
1 – 5 p.m.		
BOWLING Gaude Lanes Keesler AFB WC; Adapted WC; VI ALL AGES		
3 – 6 p.m.		
AIR RIFLE Convention Center Hall C/D		
4 – 7:30 p.m.		
SWIMMING Biloxi Natatorium ALL AGES		
25 FREESTYLE	25 BACKSTROKE	25 BREASTSTROKE
50 FREESTYLE	50 BACKSTROKE	50 BREASTSTROKE

Wheelchair, Visually Impaired, ALL, All Ages *includes all age groups*



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of Veterans Affairs



Ring, a ding, ding!

Photo by Gary
Modick/Media
Center Volunteer



It's called "table
tennis".

Photo by Gary
Modick/Media
Center Volunteer



Ready, aim, FIRE!

Photo by Gary
Modick/Media
Center Volunteer



Never fear, doubt,
or quit!

Photo by Wayne
Alley/Gulf Coast
VA Medical Center/
Medical Media



Bringing home the
gold!

Photo by Emilee
Arledge/VA Public
Affairs Volunteer

